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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration

SUBJECT: Survival under Atomic Attack

1. It seems increasingly likely that there will be an atomic attack on Washington before any effective measures can be taken to transfer CIA headquarters to a less vulnerable location.
2. Those officials of the Agency who survive the attack will undoubtedly be queried as to the measures taken by CIA in anticipation of the holocaust.
3. Steps are being taken to transfer vital records of the Agency to a more secure location, and to ensure reestablishment of a chain of command. Actual removal of headquarters offices to another location is, I presume, impossible until the Legislative Branch of the Government has appropriated funds for dispersal, and until physical problems of space and communication have been solved.
4. If the attack comes during working hours, and if the bombs are detonated anywhere over the Inner Ring of the city or over the White House-Capitol-Pentagon triangle, then the ratio of casualties in CIA will be very high indeed. If the attack occurs outside of working hours, then the ratio of casualties among CIA employees will be very much smaller. In either case, there are a few palliative measures which we might take now, and I recommend that we do so.
5. The living quarters of our employees are widely scattered within and without the District. Most of them are probably two miles or more distant from any prime targets, and it follows that most wives and children will survive the attack. The best we can do for them is to ensure that they get a modicum of advice as to what to do if there is warning of an attack, or even if the attack comes without warning. I recommend that the Agency procure copies of the attached pamphlet, "Survival under Atomic Attack", for all employees in Washington; and that all hands be urged to take them home and see to it that they are understood by their families.

6. According to the pamphlet, those who are more than 1/2 a mile away from the point of detonation will stand a 50-50 chance of survival, though many of the survivors will be seriously injured. Probabilities do not favor a detonation point directly over our heads, so it would seem the part of wisdom to take such steps as might lessen the casualties from a detonation 1/2 a mile or more away. I recommend that the following be considered for prompt implementation:

(a) Provision of a warning system. There may be a few minutes warning of the attack, and we owe it to our employees to make certain that the warning is instantly received by CIA and immediately broadcast by alarm systems through all buildings.

(b) Instructions to all employees as to what to do when the warning is received. (Many of the instructions in the attached pamphlet could be followed. Even in the temporary buildings, people could get to the ground floors, and windows and blinds on the ground floors could be closed. To prevent chaos, each person on upper floors should know precisely which room on the ground floor to go to.)

(c) Instructions to all employees as to what to do after the attack.

7. No doubt there will be a brief flurry of excitement when it becomes known, as it is sure to, that CIA is taking measures of the sort described above. But we will be open to far graver criticism if we don't take them.

JAMES M. ANDREWS  
Assistant Director  
Collection and Dissemination

*Pamphlet detached by  
Mr. Mc Connell.*